

# VR Vocational Rehabilitation

Let's go to work



Helping people with disabilities become and stay employed.  
Helping businesses find and keep talent.

[scvrd.net](http://scvrd.net)



# For more than 90 years, VR has been bringing South Carolinians with disabilities and employers together

As we expand the agency's focus on innovation and positive change, our core mission remains the same, helping individuals with barriers achieve employment success and helping businesses find and keep talented employees.

Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act we are able to combine our strengths with those of our workforce partners. These partnerships help us to ensure that individuals encountering barriers to employment receive coordinated and complementary services. These services help them acquire the skills, training and credentials they need to meet the workforce requirements of employers throughout our state. In turn, employers gain access to qualified, dedicated candidates for employment in areas such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, information technology, health care, hospitality and the service industry.



VR strives for exceptional results, while meeting the individual needs of consumers and their families through world-class services. Through demand driven, customized training with businesses, and partnerships with technical colleges, we help our consumers gain employable skills and industry-recognized credentials. Our consumers benefit by having better career opportunities, better wages, better job stability, and increased self-worth.

As we look to the opportunities and challenges of the future, we remain dedicated to assisting individuals with disabilities in achieving and maintaining success. We will continue to assist businesses by providing a strong and talented workforce. Together we will make the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department one of the best VR programs in the Nation!

Let's go to work!

*Felicia W. Johnson*  
Felicia W. Johnson, Commissioner

## Turning statistics into success

People with disabilities want to be employed, educated and participate in their communities.

More than 20 million Americans, ages 18-64, have a disability. That's almost 10% of the population. More than 13 million of them are unemployed.

In South Carolina we have more than 360,000 citizens, ages 18-64, with a disability, more than 250,000 of whom are unemployed.

Many of these individuals would like to go to work, but need assistance to prepare for and achieve that goal. They represent one of our nation's most significant resources, and each year we help thousands find jobs paying competitive wages.

These new workers become taxpaying citizens, proud of what they are achieving: building fulfilling lives for themselves and their families.



# Consumer Services

[consumers.scvrd.net](http://consumers.scvrd.net)

## Recovery leads to success

*"The most important thing I got was a plan," says Leanne Taylor. "I didn't know how to function anymore. Addiction took that away. I didn't know how to make it better and I didn't want to be the way I was."*

*VR's residential substance abuse treatment services offer help for people who are unable to get or keep a job because of drugs or alcohol. Consumers are referred by VR counselors at any of our offices.*

*Leanne worked closely with the treatment staff to build the foundation for her recovery, which included exploring career opportunities and setting goals for her future.*

*"What I learned in those 28 days will help me for the rest of my life," she says.*

*After completing the program, consumers continue to receive support from their VR counselor and local VR office.*

*Currently employed by an optometrist, Leanne continues to achieve her personal and career goals.*

*"I'm excited for my future. The possibilities are endless for what I can do."*

[treatment.scvrd.net](http://treatment.scvrd.net)

## Helping South Carolinians with disabilities become employed

If you have a disability, we can help you understand the options available in becoming or staying employed through individualized services provided at offices around the state.

If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Benefits Specialists are on hand to counsel you on work incentives and other benefits of working while educating you on the effects of earnings as you plan for employment.

### Your Vocational Goal

Once eligibility is established, and depending on your need, services are available to assist you in preparing for, obtaining, retaining, or regaining employment. You participate fully in your rehabilitation, with your counselor serving as a guide to help you navigate all of the services we offer.

**Assessment** is the first step. Your strengths, abilities, interests, and the types of jobs you are best suited for are evaluated. This may involve job shadowing, working with a mentor, or a work experience. This process identifies a specific vocational goal and the services needed to help you achieve it.

Although most assessments are done in your local office, you may be referred for comprehensive evaluation services for a more in-depth assessment if needed.



**To be eligible for VR services, you must have a physical or mental barrier to employment, need help to overcome it, and be able to benefit from VR services.**



***I'm proud to be a part of VR, knowing that I'm not out there alone. That's a scary thing for somebody with a disability: to not have a support system.***

***—Brian Denny, former VR consumer***

## Your Individualized Plan

Your plan will list the services you need to help you prepare for your chosen vocation. The specific services provided are based on your individual financial and employment needs and may include:

**Disability management** through speech, hearing, physical, occupational, muscular or aquatic therapy; diagnosis and treatment for mental or emotional disorders like substance abuse; prosthetics, orthotics, podiatry or dentistry; or rehabilitation technology, such as worksite assessment, assistive devices, technological adaptations and aids for daily living.

**Training** to enhance and increase professional skills, including classroom instruction and hands-on demand driven training; business or information technology training; community based training (job tryouts, internships, or on-the-job); or post secondary training through vocational schools, technical colleges, or four-year colleges and universities.

**Job search assistance** to help you identify and secure competitive integrated employment. In some cases, you may receive on-site job coaching to help get started on the job.

**Follow-up, post-employment, and job retention services** help once you have been hired, or if your job is jeopardized because of disability-related factors.



## VR helps youth with barriers to education or employment

build self-esteem, learn teamwork, gain communication and leadership skills, prepare for employment success, and achieve independence.

### Pre-Employment Transition Services

are **for students**, ages 13-21, with a 504 or Individual Education Plan (IEP), and include the following individual or group activities:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling on post-secondary education
- Workplace readiness training
- Instruction in self-advocacy

### Group Transition Services

are **for youth with disabilities**, ages 14-24, in or out of school, and may include:

- Tours of colleges and technical schools
- Employer or business site visits
- Career fairs coordinated with employers

### Individualized Transition Services

are **for youth eligible for VR services** who have an Individualized Plan for Employment, and may include:

- Counseling and guidance
- Post-secondary, continuing and adult education
- Vocational and work-based training
- Supported employment

[youthservices.scvrd.net](http://youthservices.scvrd.net)





# Business Services

[businesses.scvrd.net](http://businesses.scvrd.net)

## Training partnerships

*Many skills are best learned in a hands-on environment.*

*Our statewide network of training centers are a unique system for training VR consumers while providing you with a flexible outsource alternative.*

*While meeting your business needs, our consumers learn skills through tasks such as:*

- assembly
- fabrication
- inspection
- building
- packaging
- recycling

*Many consumers also earn industry recognized certifications.*

*We are committed to:*

- quality
- cost-efficiency
- flexibility
- quick turnaround time

*Together we prepare skilled employees for your workforce.*

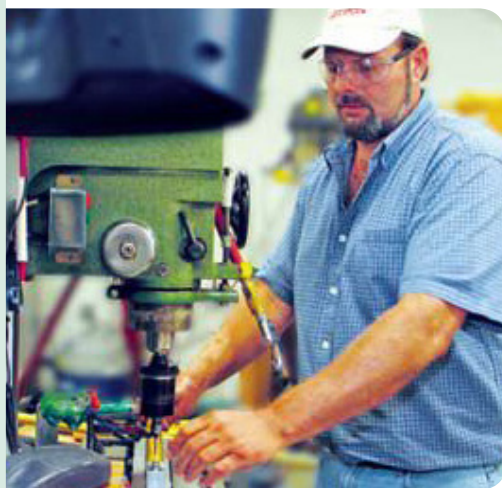
[trainingcenters.scvrd.net](http://trainingcenters.scvrd.net)

***This is one of the best programs I've ever seen.  
VR is changing people's lives and helping  
businesses thrive in the community.***

***—Jeff Mang, Plant Manager, HBD Thermold***

## Business leaders save time and money while expanding their customer base

As a workforce development partner, VR can help your business achieve its competitive advantage by developing qualified job candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have the good work habits that you value.



Employers from multiple job sectors, including federal contractors, indicate that hiring VR consumers helps them reduce training costs and increase job retention rates, while improving workforce diversity.

Through individualized assessment, we get to know our consumers so

that we can assist you to find the right person for the right job.

### Planning

VR staff meet with business and industry leaders to learn more about their workforce needs, then provide information and support to help them create a strategic plan to meet those needs. Services include:

- employer site visits
- informational presentations
- educational training sessions
- tours of our offices and training centers
- community resource referrals

### Recruiting

We work with employers to help them build a strong, diverse workforce through job fairs and vocationally-focused talent fairs. These events give them access to untapped talent pools of professionals to meet their needs.

When a position becomes available, we assist employers with services such as:

- task analysis
- pre-screening
- candidate referral
- interview scheduling



***Working with VR has opened a great door of opportunity for a labor force that I need.***

***—Charlie Weston, Owner,  
Guardian Fence Suppliers***

## Training

Through classroom instruction and hands-on projects, our consumers learn the foundational soft skills and industry-specific job skills needed to work for you.

We partner with businesses to provide work-based training to meet employers' specific needs, including:

- on-the-job training
- internships
- registered apprenticeships
- customized training

## Retention

Retention Services are available to businesses that wish to keep valuable employees who need help due to a disability that might be jeopardizing their employment.

Whether it's anxiety, depression, alcohol or other substance abuse, or physical impairments, our goal is to help a person minimize or eliminate what is interfering with their job performance.

These confidential services may include:

- comprehensive evaluation
- rehabilitation technology
- substance abuse treatment

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***Tax credits and other financial incentives are available to help with training, orientation and accommodation during the hiring process.***

## Business Development

Each of our Business Development Specialists collaborates with local businesses to understand their specific workforce development needs. As a result, they are able to provide customized solutions to meet those needs.

Businesses that partner with VR:

- find qualified, trained and dependable employees
- help shape in-demand training
- are recognized as a leader in community workforce development
- have the opportunity to teach classes on fundamental life skills and job preparedness
- network with other businesses
- share best practices

Find your local BDS at [bds.scvrd.net](https://bds.scvrd.net)

## Business Partnerships

Some of the business partners who hire our consumers and outsource work to our training centers include:

3D Systems

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Carolina

Boeing South Carolina

BPO American

Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC

Eaton Corporation

Electrolux Home Products

Embassy Suites

Freightliner Custom Chassis

INA Bearings

LeCreuset of America

Lowe's

Michelin North America

North American Rescue

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC

Siemens Energy & Automation, Inc.

TD Bank

TE Connectivity

Verizon Wireless

Walgreens



# Customized Training

## **A great return on investment**

*VR consumers become taxpayers instead of tax consumers when they become employed, reducing their reliance on government disability benefits.*

*Many receive health insurance coverage through their new jobs and no longer rely on Medicaid.*

*Competitively employed consumers pay back about \$5.43 in taxes for every \$1 spent on their rehabilitation.*

*Employed consumers repay the cost of their vocational rehabilitation in an average of 3.3 years.*

*South Carolina taxpayers receive a 30% annual rate of return on their investment.*

## **Small beginning leads to creating a talent pipeline for Bosch**

What began as a small recycling program has turned into a customized training initiative that provides VR consumers with excellent career opportunities and Bosch with a talent pipeline.

In 1997 VR began recycling used oxygen sensors for the Bosch plant in Anderson. Now, VR's Anderson Training Center has an entire room dedicated to training consumers for employment at Bosch. In addition to recycling, consumers assemble oxygen sensors from start to finish. These sensors are a critical component of car engines and are sold across the nation.

"When you purchase a one-wire oxygen sensor from an automotive

parts store it may have been made at the Anderson Training Center," says Steve Ackerman, Center Manager. "VR consumers assemble around 1,000 per day." Ackerman adds that these sensors are produced for older vehicles, while Bosch manufactures sensors for new vehicles. "We produce the same sensors, just a smaller number for a specific market."

Manufacturing oxygen sensors is a complex, multi-step process involving a variety of materials. Some of the skills VR consumers learn include following instructions, product assembly, and performing quality inspections.

"Each day we pick up parts and materials from the Bosch plant, and the next day we deliver sensors that are 95% complete to the plant," explains Ackerman. The final step in making a sensor is to weld it. Often, this is completed by VR consumers who are employed at Bosch.

As Bosch discovered the capabilities of VR consumers, the partnership has grown. A few years ago, executives from Germany were invited to tour the Anderson Training Center during their visit to the country. The tour ended in



*Bosch recently recognized VR for "the great partnership we have developed together and for being a part of our success."*



the “Bosch room,” where the executives watched consumers reclaim metals from old oxygen sensors, while others meticulously assembled new sensors. Impressed with the quality of production and the capabilities demonstrated by the consumers, the company realized that VR is a valuable source for accessing an untapped labor pool of talent.

“We gained their trust and proved that our consumers can produce a quality product,” says Ackerman. “After that, Bosch said they will consider any consumer that we deem job ready. We know their criteria and the training that their employees require. It’s a tough screening process, but every VR consumer we’ve sent for an interview has been hired.”

VR counselors carefully select appropriate consumers for training in the Bosch room. Each day, Job Readiness Training coordinators ensure that these consumers meet productivity and quality standards. Job coaches also work with the consumers during training, and after hire, to ensure that they are meeting Bosch’s requirements. A business development specialist helps identify job-ready consumers, recommends them to Bosch for consideration, and provides assistance throughout the process.



*Donna Dodgens, VR  
consumer hired by Bosch*

Donna Dodgens, a consumer recently hired to assemble oxygen sensors, is thankful to both Bosch and VR for this opportunity.

“I’m doing something worthwhile,” she says proudly. “I feel secure about my future now.”

In addition to job training, VR provided Dodgens with occupational and physical therapy. As a result, she says, “I was able to show that there are plenty of jobs that I can do.”

Bosch has hired more than seven VR consumers over the past year and a half. They begin by assembling or welding oxygen sensors, and from there may advance into a variety of positions throughout the plant.



## State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation

The South Carolina State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation board sets policy under which the Vocational Rehabilitation Department operates. The members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the South Carolina Senate, serve seven-year terms.



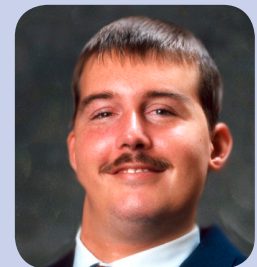
**Dr. Roxzanne Breland**  
Greenville, 4th District  
*Board Chair*



**Rhonda J. Presha**  
Elgin, 2nd District  
*Board Vice Chair*



**Timothy W. Evatt**  
Anderson  
3rd District



**Joseph A. Thomas**  
Conway  
7th District



**Ira L. Banks**  
N. Charleston  
1st District



**Lori Bell Beard**  
Walterboro  
6th District



**Felicia W. Johnson**  
VR Commissioner  
*Board Secretary*

# Disability Determination Services

[dds.scvrd.net](http://dds.scvrd.net)

## Quality and timely decisions

*"DDS employees realize that each of the many thousands of claims received by our offices is of vital importance in the life of the person who submitted it. We are proud of the conscientious and dedicated efforts of our staff to get it right."*

*—Shirley Jarrett, DDS Director*

## Responsive, timely and cost-effective services

VR's Disability Determination Services (DDS) unit processes Social Security Disability Insurance claims as well as Supplemental Security Income claims for the Social Security Administration.



You may be eligible to receive benefits from these programs when a physical or mental impairment prevents you from performing any type of work for a sustained

period of time. Highly-trained DDS employees carefully and objectively evaluate medical and vocational factors in making the decision whether documentation meets Social Security guidelines for allowance of benefits.

SC DDS's decisional accuracy surpassed regional and national averages last year. With offices in West Columbia, Charleston and Greenville, the unit handled more than 76,000 claims for SSA.

DDS also processes disability retirement claims for the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority and Medicaid disability claims.

Find out more or apply for SSI or SSDI at your local Social Security Administration office, or at [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov).

The *VR Overview* is a free publication of the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department.

Requests for copies may be sent to:

Communications  
SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department  
P.O. Box 15  
West Columbia, SC 29171-0015  
803-896-6500  
[info@scvrd.net](mailto:info@scvrd.net)

The *VR Overview* is also available on the web at [publications.scvrd.net](http://publications.scvrd.net).

In accordance with federal and state law, the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department does not discriminate against any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability in employment or in provision of services.

The SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department printed 10,000 copies of *VR Overview*. The total cost of printing this publication was \$5,110, or about \$0.51 per copy.





## Service Partners

Cooperation among public agencies is essential to expanding the opportunities for their respective consumers. Our partnerships with other agencies throughout the state result in better employment outcomes and newfound independence for people with disabilities.

Some of our partners include:

Commission for the Blind \*  
Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Corrections  
Department of Disabilities and Special Needs

Department of Education \*  
Department of Employment and Workforce \*  
Department of Juvenile Justice  
Department of Mental Health  
Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon  
Department of Social Services  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Healthy Connections (administered by the SCDHHS)  
State and local Workforce Development Boards  
Technical colleges and universities  
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School  
Workers' Compensation Commission

*\* SC Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core partner*

# VR Offices

offices.scvrd.net

## **Aiken \***

855 York St. N.E.  
Aiken, SC 29801  
803-641-7630 (Office/TDD)  
800-861-9410 (Toll free)

## **Anderson \***

3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Anderson, SC 29625  
864-224-6391 (Office/TDD)

## **Beaufort \***

747 Robert Smalls Parkway  
Beaufort, SC 29906  
843-522-1010 (Office/TDD)

## **Bennettville \***

1029 SC-9  
Bennettville, SC 29512  
843-479-8318 (Office/TDD)  
800-849-4878 (Toll free)

## **Camden \***

15 Battleship Road Ext.  
Camden, SC 29020  
803-432-1068 (Office/TDD)  
866-206-5280 (Toll free)

## **Clinton \***

22861 Highway 76 E  
Clinton, SC 29325  
864-984-6563 (Office/TTY)  
866-443-0103 (Toll free)

## **Columbia (main office)**

516 Percival Road  
Columbia, SC 29206  
803-782-4239 (Office/TDD)  
866-206-5280 (Toll free)

## **Columbia (downtown)**

1430-A Confederate Avenue  
Columbia, SC 29202  
803-898-8866 (Office)

## **Columbia (training center) \***

201 Corporate Park Boulevard  
Columbia, SC 29223  
803-691-8284 (Office)

## **Conway \***

3009 Fourth Avenue  
Conway, SC 29527  
843-248-2235 (Office/TTY)

## **Dillon**

309 North First Avenue  
Dillon, SC 29536  
843-774-3691 (Office)

## **Florence \***

1947 West Darlington Street  
Florence, SC 29501  
843-662-8114 (Office/TTY)

## **Gaffney \***

364 Huntington Road  
Gaffney, SC 29341  
864-489-9954 (Office/TTY)  
866-451-1481 (Toll free)

## **Georgetown**

1777 N. Fraser Street  
Georgetown, SC 29440  
843-546-2595 (Office/TTY)

## **Greenville \***

105 Parkins Mill Road  
Greenville, SC 29607  
864-297-3066 (Office/TDD)

## **Greenwood \***

2345 Highway 72/221 E  
Greenwood, SC 29649  
864-229-5827 (Office/TDD)  
866-443-0162 (Toll free)

## **Hartsville \***

2413 Stadium Road  
Hartsville, SC 29550  
843-332-2262 (Office/TTY)

## **Jonesville**

131 North Main Street  
Jonesville, SC 29353  
864-475-5000 (Office/TTY)

## **Kingstree \***

405 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue  
Kingstree, SC 29556  
843-354-5252 (Office)

## **Lancaster \***

1150 Roddey Drive  
Lancaster, SC 29720  
803-285-6909 (Office/TDD)

## **Lyman \***

180 Groce Road  
Lyman, SC 29365  
864-249-8030 (Office/TDD)  
888-322-9391 (Toll free)

## **Moncks Corner \***

2954 S. Live Oak Drive  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
843-761-6036 (Office/TDD)  
866-297-6808 (Toll free)

## **Newberry**

2601 Evans Street  
Newberry, SC 29108  
803-276-8438 (Office/TTY)

## **North Charleston \***

4360 Dorchester Road  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
843-740-1600 (Office/TDD)

## **Orangeburg \***

1661 Joe S. Jeffords Hwy S.E.  
Orangeburg, SC 29115  
803-534-4939 (Office/TDD)

## **Rock Hill \***

1020 Heckle Blvd.  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
803-327-7106 (Office/TDD)

## **Seneca \***

1951 Wells Highway  
Seneca, SC 29678  
864-882-6669 (Office/TDD)  
866-313-0082 (Toll free)

## **Spartanburg \***

353 S. Church Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29306  
864-585-3693 (Office/TTY)  
866-451-1480 (Toll free)

## **Sumter \***

1760 North Main Street  
Sumter, SC 29153  
803-469-2960 (Office/TTY)

## **Walterboro \***

919 Thunderbolt Drive  
Walterboro, SC 29488  
843-538-3116 (Office/TDD)  
888-577-3549 (Toll free)

## **West Columbia \***

1330 Boston Ave.  
West Columbia, SC 29170  
803-896-6333 (Office/TDD)  
866-206-5184 (Toll free)

*\* Office with training center*

